

Dowagiac Daily News

K&M creating 120 jobs next 18-24 months

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CASSOPOLIS - K&M Machine-Fabricating, Inc. announced that as a result of superior performance and attention to quality standards, employees will once again receive annual bonuses, this year amounting to \$4,200 to each hourly employee with at least one year of employment.

Although Michigan remains in its fourth year of recession, K&M has now awarded bonuses over the last four years amounting to \$15,500 per hourly employee.

Contrary to the state's high unemployment rate, K&M continues to create jobs and looks to fill at least 120 high-paying positions during the next 18 to 24 months.

"The only limiting factor to our aggressive growth plans right now is people," said Derek McLoughlin, K&M general manager.

"We need to add to our immensely talented workforce so we can deliver the products and services our customers are demanding."

Part of K&M's expansion is a result of its prominent role in the renewable energy sector.

In recent years, the high price of oil has led to an increased demand for environmentally-friendly and cost-effective sources of energy.

Recognizing that wind power represents a viable technological and commercial form of alternative energy, K&M has devoted company resources to growing its business in this sector.

"Our respected position in the energy industry didn't happen overnight," said Gary Galeziewski, K&M CFO. "We leveraged our advanced engineering and manufacturing technologies acquired over decades in the mining and power generation industries into the wind power segment."

In fact, the company's involvement with wind power began more than 10 years ago with some of the industry's earliest pioneers of wind technology.

Today, major players such as Clipper Wind and Gamesa trust K&M to produce quality components for their wind turbines.

K&M's sustainable growth has allowed for continuous investment in technology, equipment and people.

The company is currently constructing a 52,000-square-foot addition to its machine shop and ordered several state-of-the-art manufacturing machines, including nine new pieces of CNC equipment. Future capital and human investments will largely focus on K&M wind power services to maintain a leadership position in the industry.

Officials from K&M Machine-Fabricating Inc. recently hosted Andy Levin, deputy director of the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, to discuss workforce development.

Levin's visit came on the heels of an earlier visit by Gov. Jennifer Granholm during her tour of leading Michigan-based alternative energy businesses.

Levin and K&M officials discussed their need for qualified candidates. Job openings include CNC machinists, heavy plate welders, engineers, quality technicians, supervisors and other professionals.